

DESIGN GUIDELINES



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Chapter

4

Basic Design Principles

A village scale and character will be emphasized for all future development and property improvements to reinforce Carlsbad Village's uniqueness, enhance its image as a shopping and entertainment destination and improve its livability as a mixed-use residential environment.

Ten basic design principles will be utilized in the design review process for property improvements and new construction in the Village. The Planning Commission must be satisfied that the applicant has made an honest effort to conform to each of these principles.

1. Development shall have an overall informal character.
2. Architectural design shall emphasize variety and diversity.
3. Development shall be small in scale.
4. Intensity of development shall be encouraged.
5. All development shall have a strong relationship to the street.
6. A strong emphasis shall be placed on the design of ground floor facades.
7. Buildings shall be enriched with architectural features and details.
8. Landscaping shall be an important component of the architectural design.
9. Parking shall be visually subordinated.
10. Signage shall be appropriate to a village character.

Site Planning

Provide a variety of setbacks along any single commercial block front.

Varied setbacks will provide a desired informality and diversity of appearance and will allow for special landscaping. The range of setbacks along a frontage need not be great and need not be applied along any single parcel frontage.

Provide benches and low walls along public pedestrian frontages.

Places for people to rest briefly or wait for friends can both encourage longer shopping trips to the Village and express the feeling that Village merchants care about the comfort and convenience of their customers.

Maintain retail continuity along pedestrian-oriented frontages.

The pedestrian shopping experience should not be interrupted by parking lots, blank walls or non-contributing uses.

Avoid drive-thru service uses.

Drive-thru windows for banks, fast food restaurants and similar uses take up valuable Village land area and create potential pedestrian/vehicular conflicts.

Minimize privacy loss for adjacent residential uses.

Placement of windows and trash areas should be sensitive to any adjacent residential units, outdoor dining areas or pedestrian areas.

Encourage off-street courtyards accessible from major pedestrian walkways.

Courtyards can enrich the Village environment providing more businesses (e.g., art galleries and restaurants) and personal services (e.g., beauty and nail salons) conveniently located near the greatest intensity of pedestrian shopping activity.

Emphasize an abundance of landscaping planted to create an informal character.

Like its architecture, the Village landscaping should be informal in character with a great deal of variety and diversity. Landscaping within each parcel should be personalized to the specifics of the building and site. Colorful flowers in planter boxes and pots, in planting beds, on trellises and on flowering trees will add to the richness of the visual environment and to the

unique living and marketing image sought for the Village. All landscaping including required irrigation systems must conform to the City's adopted Landscape Manual.

**Treat structures as individual buildings set within a landscaped green space. Exceptions:
Buildings fronting on:**

- Carlsbad Village Drive
- State Street
- Grand Avenue
- Carlsbad Blvd., between Carlsbad Village Drive and Grand Avenue
- Roosevelt Street (West Side)

Parking and Access

Provide landscaping within surface parking lots.

Trees in addition to perimeter landscaping should be provided within parking lots at a ratio of one for every four parking stalls. Trees may be clustered in concentrated planting areas to break up large parking lot surfaces.

Provide access to parking areas from alleys wherever possible.

Access from adjacent alleys will allow more of the site to be devoted to landscaping and will minimize conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles.

Locate parking at the rear of lots.

Parking areas behind buildings will have the least visual impact and likelihood of affecting retail continuity.

Devote all parking lot areas not specifically required for parking spaces or circulation to landscaping.

Paving within parking areas should be minimized and landscaped areas maximized to provide the visual and environmental quality needed to support the desired Village character.

Avoid parking in front setback areas.

All commercial and residential buildings should have a strong relationship to the street and setback areas should be devoted to landscaping.

Avoid curb cuts along major pedestrian areas.

- *State Street*
- *Grand Avenue (between Roosevelt Street and Carlsbad Boulevard)*
- *Carlsbad Boulevard (between Grand Avenue and Carlsbad Village Drive)*
- *Roosevelt Street (between Beech and Walnut)*

Pedestrian retail continuity relies on a minimum of conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. Exceptions to the curb cut prohibition may be considered where no other access to parking is possible or where conflicts are likely to be minimal.

Avoid parking in block corner locations.

Corners within the Village are visually important and should be occupied by interesting buildings. However, owing to limited location opportunities, public parking facilities may be exempted so long as substantial setbacks and landscaping are provided.

Provide setbacks and landscaping between any parking lot and adjacent sidewalks, alleys or other paved pedestrian areas.

The visual intrusion of automobile parking within the Village needs to be minimized. Parking lots should be integrated with adjacent buildings by low walls and landscaping to the maximum degree possible.

Avoid buildings which devote significant portions of their ground floor space to parking uses.

The placement of buildings over ground level parking limits the accommodation of supportive ground floor uses and detracts from the appearance of the building.

Place parking for commercial or larger residential projects below grade wherever feasible.

The vertical stacking of uses will allow greater development intensity in the Village and the provision of more surface area for landscaping.

Enhance parking lot surfaces.

The use of modular concrete pavers, and the use of brick or concrete bands to divide parking lot paving into small, interrelated segments should be used wherever possible.

Safe access for parking.

If necessary to maintain safe vehicular access for parking purposes on adjacent properties, shared or joint use driveways will be encouraged. In the absence of an agreement between adjacent owners for shared or joint use driveways, setbacks may be adjusted only to the extent necessary to provide safe vehicular access to existing developments, upon a finding that the set back reduction is the only feasible alternative for safe access.

Building Forms

Provide for variety and diversity.

An informal character and a sense of individuality are desired. Each building should express its uniqueness of structure, location or tenant and should be designed especially for their sites and not mere copies of generic building types which might be found anywhere.

Step taller buildings back at upper levels.

Building structures should not overwhelm adjacent pedestrian areas. Setbacks on taller buildings allow the maintenance of a small scale character near street level. In cases where taller buildings do not negatively affect the visual appearance of a block area, the use of balconies and richer details may be considered in lieu of setbacks.

Break large buildings into smaller units.

Separations between structures or recessed façade areas should be used to break large building masses into units similar in size to adjacent and nearby smaller lot development.

Maintain a relatively consistent building height along block faces.

Village-scale streetscapes generally maintain an appearance of one and two story buildings which unifies the commercial areas and integrates the appearance of adjacent commercial and residential areas.

Utilize simple building forms.

Simple building forms related to classic residential building shapes can establish a sense of timelessness and comfortably relate buildings to one another. Trendy and “look at me” design solutions are strongly discouraged.

Roof Forms

Emphasize the use of gable roofs with slopes of 7 in 12 or greater.

Roof forms should be prominent, simply treated and used to integrate commercial and residential structures into a unified visual environment. Gable ends or elements which face the streets are encouraged.

Encourage the use of dormers in gable roofs.

Dormers can add scale and interest to larger roof forms as well as provide additional occupied space within the roof form.

Emphasize wood and composition shingle roofs.

Roofs within the Village need some sense of material and color continuity because of their visual prominence and the desire to integrate commercial and residential developments into a visually unified mixed-use neighborhood. Textured roofs of similar materials and a medium to dark color range should be used to accomplish this goal.

Exceptions:

- *Clay tile roofs are acceptable in Land Use District 5 and north along Roosevelt Street to Carlsbad Village Drive in order to promote a Hispanic character.*
- *Metal roofs are acceptable in Land Use District 6.*

Avoid flat roofs.

Flat roofs should be limited to minor areas which cannot be easily seen.

Screen mechanical equipment from public view.

Roof mounted mechanical equipment should be integrated into the roof form or screened from view with elements appropriate to the building's form and appearance. Ground mounted equipment should be screened with walls and landscaping.

Avoid mansard roof forms.

Facade elements made to appear as roofs are not appropriate to the desired Village character.

Building Facades

Emphasize an informal architectural character.

Building facades should be visually friendly and larger buildings should be non-symmetrical in composition.

Design visual interest into all sides of buildings.

Front and side facades facing streets or public access ways should receive special design attention. Other facades which are visible should also be visually pleasant.

Utilize small individual windows except on commercial storefronts.

Smaller punched window openings are appropriate to the Village character and will assist in emphasizing the larger commercial storefront windows. Proportions of windows should generally be vertical. Strip ribbon windows as found on commercial office buildings are not appropriate.

Provide façade projections and recesses.

Façade projections such as bay windows, planter boxes and roof overhangs as well as entry way recesses are elements which add richness to Village facades through the creation of shadows and the contrast between sunny and shady surfaces. Roof overhangs should be large enough to be a strong element of the design and supporting brackets, extended roof rafters or beams, and rich architectural detail are strongly encouraged.

Give special design attention to upper levels of commercial structures.

Special window trim, awnings, flower boxes and other details should be used to increase the visual attractiveness of upper levels and relate the businesses or residences more strongly to the street and public walkways.

Provide special treatment to entries for upper level uses.

Recesses, paneled doors, side lights, awnings, carriage lights, planters, special signing and similar features should be used to make entries to upper level businesses or residences distinctive.

Utilize applied surface ornamentation and other detail elements for visual interest and scale.

Tile, wood and metal ornament should be considered where appropriate to add richness and small scale detail to building facades. Examples include street numbers, accent spots or bands and art elements. Special treatment of gable ends such as shingles should be considered. Interesting projecting sign, planter box and flag display brackets may also be appropriate.

Respect the materials and character of adjacent development.

Building materials and colors of new construction should be sensitive to adjacent buildings and should promote a sense of visual continuity along the street rather than seeking to be focal points.

Emphasize the use of the following wall materials:

- *Wood siding*
- *Wood shingles*
- *Wood board and batten siding*
- *Stucco*

Exception:

Metal siding is acceptable in the District 6 for automotive and light industrial uses.

Avoid the use of the following materials:

- *Simulated materials such as imitation brick or stone, marble, wood, etc.*
- *Indoor/ outdoor carpeting.*
- *Any material that would constitute a fire and/ or public hazard.*
- *Distressed wood of any type (i.e., pecky cedar).*

Avoid tinted or reflective window glass.

Clear window glass allows views into storefronts and other spaces as well as allows those inside to be connected with the environment and activity outside. Tinted and reflective glass establish an appearance of isolation and should not be used in the Village. Where glare and heat gain are problems, other means of shielding openings such as awnings should be utilized.

Utilize wood, dark anodized aluminum or vinyl coated metal door and window frames.

Shiny, mill finished aluminum materials typical of storefronts of the 1950's and 60's are inappropriate to the Village.

Avoid metal awnings and canopies.

Fabric awnings should be used to add color and interest to the Village. They should be constructed of fire treated or non-flammable materials.

Encourage architectural facades emphasizing a Hispanic character in Land Use District 5.

Stucco walls, clay tile roofs, glazed tile trim and tile paving are encouraged. Planters and pot brackets should be generously used to provide for an abundance of flowering plants.

Utilize light and neutral base colors.

Generally muted color schemes will promote visual unity and allow awnings, window displays, signs and flower landscaping to be given proper emphasis. White, dark and brighter trim colors are all generally acceptable.

Limit the materials and color palette on any single building.

Variety and diversity are encouraged in the Village but too much on any single building can be visually disruptive. The utilization of more than three surface materials or colors should only rarely be considered.

Commercial Storefronts

Provide significant storefront glazing.

A minimum of 60% of ground floor storefronts should be devoted to display windows and entries.

Avoid large blank walls.

Blank walls are disruptive to retail continuity. Where areas of blank walls adjacent to pedestrian areas are unavoidable, they should be treated with lattice work and landscaping or other elements such as art work to soften their impact.

Encourage large window openings for restaurants.

Sliding or fold back windows which provide large openings can do much to add interest to adjacent pedestrian areas while creating an outdoor dining feeling while seated inside.

Encourage the use of fabric awnings over storefront windows and entries.

Awnings add color, pedestrian weather protection and special signing opportunities and should be provided wherever possible to establish a sense of continuity along the street frontage. Back lit awnings where the awning is treated as a large sign should not be used.

Emphasize display windows with special lighting.

Special display lighting should be provided and the use of small pin lights should be strongly considered to frame display windows and provide a nighttime sparkle. Use of pin lights should also be considered to highlight interesting façade profiles or special elements such as balconies, cornices and similar features.

Encourage the use of Dutch doors.

Wood Dutch doors where the upper panels may be separately opened in good weather serve to create a friendly shopping environment and strong connection between the shops and passing pedestrians.

Utilize small paned windows.

Divided pane windows used in storefront display windows, entry doors and transoms lend a traditional feel to shops and reinforce a village character. Not all windows need to be treated in this way but enough along the block front should be to become a noticeable feature of the Village's storefronts.

Develop a total design concept.

Facade designs should unify all design elements including upper level treatments and building signage.

Provide frequent entries.

Long storefronts should have multiple entries to preserve the small scale and character of the Village.

Limit the extent of entry openings.

Entry openings should be limited to about 30% of the storefront width or about eight feet whichever is larger to preserve display windows. Exceptions may be made for uses which open up all or most of the facade (e.g., bookstalls, produce markets).

Avoid exterior pull down shutters and sliding or fixed security grilles over windows along street frontages.

The presence of such security devices is inappropriate to the image and character of the Village.

Emphasize storefront entries.

Entries should be recessed and designed to uniquely express the special quality of the store, merchandise or owner. Planters, small display windows, special lighting fixtures, textured paving, creative signing and similar features should be used.

Integrate fences and walls into the building design.

Fences and walls, such as those surrounding trash areas and mechanical equipment, should appear to be a part of the building and not merely tacked on utilitarian elements.

Residential

Encourage front entry gardens.

Even small setbacks can be enhanced with shrubs and flowers to both bring visual pleasure to the occupants and contribute to the overall visual quality of the neighborhood.

Locate residential units near front property lines and orient entries to the street.

Residential units and entries oriented to the street can increase the sense of neighborhood and provide more private outdoor space at the rear of parcels.

Provide front entry porches.

Covered entry areas from small porches over entry doors to larger porches stretching across the width of the façade are one of the features which distinguish older, traditional residential areas in our cities. Porches provide a welcome sense of entry and given depth and richness to street front facades.

Provide windows looking out to the street.

Windows related to the street can increase the feeling of neighborhood and enhance a sense of security. Unfriendly blank facades and high walls should be avoided.

Utilize simple color schemes.

A neutral base color with white or a light color trim accented with the limited use of brighter colors would be appropriate to the scale and character of the neighborhood. The trim color should be used to link porches, windows, gable trim and other building details into a unified composition. In some cases, brighter base colors may be acceptable but only on very small residences or in limited areas.

Provide decorative details to enrich facades including the following:

- *Decorative balustrades and column capitals or brackets on entry porches.*
- *Decorative trim and brackets at gable ends and other roof overhangs.*
- *Decorative infill materials such as shingles at gable ends.*
- *Bay windows.*
- *Divided window panes.*
- *Projecting decorative window trim.*
- *Below window planter boxes.*
- *Attached lattice work to accommodate flowering plants and vines.*

Elements of this type will add shade and shadow to facades to increase their interest while also providing the means to establish a subtle but rich uniqueness for each residence.

Emphasize “Cottage” form, scale and character.

The use of gable roofs, varied roof heights, dormers to provide additional usable space in attic areas, interesting details and an informal composition even on larger sites, will enhance the area’s Village character and provide a visual relationship between residential and adjacent commercial buildings.

Emphasize an abundance of landscaping.

Informal landscaping with trees, shrubs, ground cover, overhead trellises and especially flowering plants will enhance the overall character of the neighborhood, provide additional privacy between residences and allow each family to project their unique identity. Large areas of paving especially when visible from adjacent sidewalks are discouraged and front or side yard paved areas for vehicle parking are not appropriate.

Limit access drives to garages or surface parking areas.

The minimization of paving along street frontages will allow the development of a richer landscaped environment. Driveways should be limited to a maximum of 10 feet in width except along alleys where 20 feet is acceptable.

Encourage detached garages which are subordinate to visual importance to the house itself.

Garages and their entries should not be allowed to dominate the architectural character of a home or residential complex. They should be placed toward the rear of a parcel wherever possible.

Provide quality designed fences and walls.

Open picket fences are encouraged along street frontages and perpendicular to streets in front yard areas. Other fences and walls should provide a positive visual appearance and depth of surface treatment provided by vertical posts, board and battens, lattice work or similar constructions. Chain link fences and solid concrete block walls are strongly discouraged.

Visually separate multi-family developments into smaller components.

Multi-family complexes should be divided into elements which are compatible with nearby single family units by offsets in the building façade and other building elements. An overall appearance of vertical elements is desired over a horizontal character, and multiple entries oriented to the street are encouraged.

Interim Conditions

In District 4 along North State Street and District 6 along Tyler Street, existing automotive and industrial uses will remain for some time before being replaced by new construction conforming to the requirements of this Village Design Manual. Property owners are encouraged to improve the appearance of their properties during that interim period to reduce negative visual impacts which might discourage nearby property investments to improve the Village.

Property owners and tenants may seek assistance from the Director of Housing & Neighborhood Services in planning and carrying out physical building improvements, perimeter fence changes and general landscape beautification.

Add fabric awnings and planter boxes at windows and near entries.

The shadow lines and color from these elements will soften the appearance of the utilitarian buildings while adding emphasis to main office entries.

Add lattice work and landscaping to blank walls.

Large blank walls which can be seen from the street should have simple lattice work attached to the wall to support flowering vines growing out of planters placed at their base.

Paint faded building facades.

New paint in muted colors will give the buildings a fresh look while blending into the surrounding environment more successfully.

Plant fast growing and flowering vines along fences and walls.

Vines supplemented by trees and other landscaping will soften the appearance of the fencing and screen views to functional on-site work and storage areas.

Separate parking areas from sidewalks with low walls and landscaping.

This separation will assist in creating a positive edge to the street and sidewalk.

Upgrade exterior lighting fixtures.

Older industrial-type fixtures should be replaced with newer ones which are attractive in appearance and allow direct light for security purposes without glare.

Minimize the visual impact of trash collection areas.

Any trash areas and dumpsters which can be seen from the street should be relocated and screened.

Reduce the amount of paving adjacent to near the front property line.

The use of landscaping or if paving is absolutely necessary, modular concrete pavers will soften the appearance of building fronts and eliminate the sense of broad expanse of paving across streets, sidewalks and building parcels. Parking or lots in front of buildings should be relocated or eliminated.

Improve business signage.

The proliferation of secondary signs should be reduced and remaining signs reorganized or replaced to reduce overall visual clutter. Interior illuminated signs should be replaced with exterior illuminated ones appropriate to the desired Village character.